

Submitter:

Colin Meyer

On Behalf Of:

Committee:

House Committee On Judiciary

Measure, Appointment or Topic:

HB4145

My name is Colin Meyer, and I am the owner of Goliath Defense, LLC, a small, family-owned and owner-operated firearms business in Albany, Oregon. We are a federally licensed firearms dealer, and I am submitting this testimony in strong opposition to House Bill 4145.

Goliath Defense already operates under extensive federal and state regulation. We conduct background checks on every transfer, maintain detailed records subject to ATF inspection, comply with storage and security requirements, and refuse sales when required by law or sound judgment. These obligations are significant, costly, and strictly enforced. HB 4145 would add further liability and regulatory risk that disproportionately impacts small, locally owned gun shops like ours.

Unlike large national retailers, small businesses do not have compliance departments or teams of attorneys. Even modest increases in civil liability or vague compliance standards create serious financial and legal risk. For many family-owned shops, this type of uncertainty can force closure, eliminating local jobs and reducing lawful access for Oregonians who rely on licensed dealers to exercise their rights legally and responsibly.

HB 4145 also raises serious constitutional concerns. The U.S. Supreme Court has repeatedly affirmed that the Second Amendment protects an individual right to keep and bear arms. In *District of Columbia v. Heller* (2008), the Court recognized that this right would be meaningless if citizens could not acquire firearms that are in common use through lawful channels. Legislation that drives lawful dealers out of business or makes operation unreasonably risky functions as a de facto restriction on that right.

More recently, in *New York State Rifle & Pistol Association v. Bruen* (2022), the Supreme Court made clear that firearm regulations are constitutional only if they are consistent with the Nation's historical tradition of firearm regulation. The Court explicitly rejected interest-balancing or policy-based justifications. There is no historical tradition of imposing broad civil liability or regulatory punishment on lawful firearms dealers for the independent criminal acts of third parties. HB 4145 represents a modern and constitutionally suspect approach that fails this standard.

To the extent this bill relies on vague standards or retroactive liability, it also raises due process concerns under the Fourteenth Amendment. Laws that fail to provide clear, objective rules invite arbitrary enforcement and place lawful businesses in constant legal jeopardy, making compliance impossible to confidently achieve.

These concerns are further reinforced by Article I, Section 27 of the Oregon Constitution, which guarantees that the people shall have the right to bear arms for the defense of themselves and the State. Undermining lawful commerce through excessive regulation or liability directly interferes with that guarantee.

HB 4145 targets lawful businesses rather than criminal behavior. Criminals do not purchase firearms from licensed dealers, do not submit to background checks, and do not comply with regulations. Shifting responsibility onto compliant dealers does not enhance public safety; it penalizes those who already follow the law.

For these reasons, I respectfully urge the committee to reject House Bill 4145.

Respectfully,
Colin Meyer
Owner, Goliath Defense, LLC
Albany, Oregon